



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

September 20, 2012 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: Ed Sloboda, Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham, Brian Hills, Ken Miller, John Ross, Darcy Wills, Joan Hughson, Ken Brown, Lorraine Nicol, Tim Romanow and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Darlene Sakires, Paulette Fox, William Chamber, Don Welsh, Aaron Domes

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross brought the meeting to order at 1:37pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from last meeting

- The minutes from June 28th, 2012 were reviewed.

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to accept the minutes as presented. Ken Brown seconded. **Carried.**

3. Financial Statements Update

- Will Lindeman presented the financial statement.
 - \$100,000 grant for core funding was received from ESRD
 - Closing balance as of August 31, 2012 was \$337,241.03

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to accept the financial statement as presented. Warren Cunningham seconded. **Carried.**

4. 2012 WPAC Summit update

- Agenda
 - Tim presented the 2012 WPAC Summit agenda
- Discussion:
 - There is need to visit the Canals and first drop structure on the tour
 - Will start at Lake Sherburne dam site, and then head to siphons at hooks hideaway.
 - 3 officials from the US Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation will guide the tour at the siphons and give a presentation on the site
 - Kevin France will give a talk on grassland recovery after fire. In the event that we are unable to go to North Fork, Kevin can meet us at Del Bonita
 - Dr. Uldis Silins who is working on a research project with the MRWCC to do an analysis on the impact of the Milk River fire on water quality will join us on the tour
 - MRWCC will assist with sample collection at various sites affected by fire within the Milk River watershed, primarily focused on runoff collection
 - Will need to get satellite imagery of the fire area
 - On September 25th, 2012 participants will be bused to WOSPP at 7:45am
 - John Ross to present a greeting on behalf of the MRWCC
 - Concurrent sessions will start at 9:30am in the morning and 1pm in the afternoon
 - On September 26th, 2012 the summit will start at 9am at Milk River Civic Center
 - Although the Minister of ESRD was given 20 minutes for her speech, she will be asked to take as much time as she needed
 - On September 27th, 2012 the summit will be held in Lethbridge at the Holiday Inn from 8:30am to 12 noon
 - Will need a feedback form in the registration package
 - Summit feedback to be shared with other WPACs
- Facility and logistics
 - All plans have been finalized
- Registration

- In the event that the tour bus is late, Ken and Wendy Brown and Lorraine Nicol offered to man the registration desk
- Budget
 - The budget was presented as follows:
 - \$24,600 total income
 - \$18,500.29 total expenditure
 - \$6,099.71 balance
 - This amount is subject to change since some of the expenses are just estimates and also it does not reflect registration fee for the MRWCC staff and board members which comes to about \$3,000
- Transportation
 - There will be no need to rent an emergency vehicle since some members will take their own vehicles
 - Ed will be at the MRWCC office at 8am on September 24 with the bus to pick up people who will need transport from Milk River
- Volunteers
 - Will need volunteers for to man registration table at Holiday Inn in the event that the bus is late. Ken and Wendy Brown and Lorraine Nicol offered to help
 - Will and Warren will help with set up at Civic Center afternoon of September 25
 - Will need help cleaning up after the banquet

5. University of Lethbridge Research Study

- Some board members were invited to participate in a research study on the effectiveness of water governance in the South Saskatchewan River Basin
- Specific interest is in the perception of stakeholders directly involved in water governance
- Researchers are continuing to seek local landowners to volunteer for interviews

6. Kids Motion

- A request to help kids with Disabilities live a better life by purchasing advertising space in the Kids in Motion book was discussed
- The consensus was no action for the request but look at other ways of sponsoring the kids such as sponsoring registration fees for one or two of the youth to attend our local youth Range Days activities if possible

Action: Considering that we are a nonprofit organization, we need to come up with a policy with basic principles on how to support other organizations. To be discussed at the next meeting, Tim will look into drafting a policy for board review

7. Urban Municipality Board representative

- Need to send a letter to Town of Milk River Town Council to inquire if someone can be appointed who is able to attend meetings
- If there is no representation for Urban Municipality on the board from Town of Milk River, there is need to look at Village of Coutts for a representative

8. Alberta Innovates Energy and Environment Solutions meeting report

- Tim attended a meeting on Alberta Innovates Energy and Environment Solutions August 24
- The purpose of the meeting was to inform participants on the current activities and planned initiatives in water resources and introduce new personnel and staff plans following David Hills departure
- John Zhou is the acting executive director, comes from the Energy side; has worked closely with David Hill since the creation of Alberta Innovates, interested in “supporting more on the ground practical research projects”
- Areas of research topics and initiatives to be funded are:
 - 1. Water security, risk and vulnerability
 - Wastewater treatment for rural and cluster systems
 - Pathogens and contaminant (arsenic) transport in rural Alberta
 - Dealing with water disinfection by-products
 - Conjunctive surface water and groundwater management and Dynamics of water supplies
 - Regulation and planning groundwater withdrawals

2. Watershed stewardship and ecosystem management

- Economic connections in support of headwater source protection
- Sustainable water management in the SSRB
- Combatting eutrophication
- Natural surface water-groundwater interaction and human impacts in LAR
- Functional environmental flow

3. Conservation, efficiency and productivity

- Economic instruments to support environmental management, and drive conservation, efficiency & productivity
- Improvements in irrigated agriculture water use and economics
- Water-energy-food nexus in a healthy environment
- Yields in irrigated agriculture

4. Outreach

- Celebrating fresh ideas
 - Idea summit
 - Annual symposium
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- There was interest in continuing wetland projects in the boreal region, though it was identified that there is a need to do more research projects in Southern Alberta
 - Main focus on energy, environmental solutions and WFL partners are an afterthought
 - Potential to partner with WPACs on new projects and initiatives, in partnership projects
 - 10million in project funding projected over the next three years, will consider multiyear project
 - They will be accepting project proposals and deadline to send proposals is October 23, 2012
 - It was recommended that a meeting with David Hill be organized to talk about Alberta Innovates research projects and MRWCC connections to potential projects

Action: Tim to organize a meeting with David Hill and potential research partners interested in work within the Milk River Watershed to discuss potential research projects with Alberta Innovates. And it was suggested that Lorraine, the Academia representative and Will Lindeman, the Research and Monitoring Team Chair be included in the discussions

NOTE: Letter of intent submission period has been pushed back at the request of GOA to better align with other water initiatives to be launched in October 2012, awaiting further details from Alberta Innovates.

9. Aquatic Invasive Species Risk Analysis Report

- Tim and Mary attended a Risk Analysis Aquatic Invasive Species Workshop in Waterton September 10 and 11
- The focus was on Zebra and Quagga mussels and Eurasian Water Milfoil
- More emphasis on the economic impact of mussels
- Invasion of the mussels in the mid and eastern U.S
- Montana and Idaho have extensive monitoring programs for mussels
- No extensive monitoring done in Alberta despite a lot of boat traffic from US to Canada
- There is currently no legislation to support management of the mussels if discovered in Alberta
- Waterton has started to do some boat inspections but with no legislation in place to support monitoring it is difficult
- Need legislation in place to support quarantine if discovered
- High cost of cleanup if ever discovered
- There is a role for MRWCC to help with public awareness of this invasive species
- Suggested to provide common messaging within our Watershed planning exercises to emphasize our risk of invasion and potential cost to aquatic ecosystem and infrastructure, include statements to focus on regional activities to monitor and manage aquatic invasive threats.

10. Team Updates

- Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)
 - CAIT meeting was held September 6
 - i. Youth Range Days Report
 - Successful
 - 32 youths attended
 - Good feed back
 - Next year will be held in Cypress Hills
 - Milk River Ag. Society sponsored local kids
 - About 8 local kids attended this year
 - Kids from different backgrounds attended
 - Need to use this opportunity to attract youth's parents to join CAIT
 - Ed to explore further
 - ii. Hike Tour Update
 - Scheduled for October 13
 - An ad has been sent out
 - Confirming speakers
 - iii. Bonanza day Report
 - Got 1st prize
 - Good feedback
 - iv. Shell FuellingChange Program
 - Planning a field day to demonstrate decommissioning abandoned wells
 - Planning to decommission 2 wells: a flowing well and a hand dug well
 - Need the board's input on how to choose the wells
 - Come up with a factsheet of information
 - Advertise in the newsletter and see if the ad can be placed in other newsletters like county newsletters
 - Use wells that we surveyed 2011
 - v. Cenovus Energy Environmental Education Leadership Clinic
 - Cenovus Energy Environmental Education Leadership Clinic is a transformative learning opportunity open to all groups that deliver environmental education in Alberta
 - This leadership clinic is so named because it provides teams the skills and plans they need to become leaders in their field
 - The goal of the leadership clinic is to assist each team in improving their performance in the area of responsible environmental behaviour
 - Will take place November 5 to 8
 - CAIT team submitted an application which was accepted
 - The CAIT team will attend and all expenses for the clinic will be paid by Cenovus
- Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
 - i. Milk River Microbial Source Tracking Project Update
 - MRWCC helped collect samples
 - ARD In the process of analysis
 - Interim findings will be presented at the summit
 - ii. 2012 Surface Water Quality Monitoring Project Update
 - Sampling underway
 - One more sample to go
 - 2012 sampling done mid-October
 - High temperatures causing high fecal counts
 - Passed data to ESRD and we are getting HWY 880 data from ESRD
- State of the Watershed Team
 - i. SOW report update
 - Established teams from Montana and Saskatchewan
 - Have issues on how data will fit together
 - Saskatchewan Water Authority are putting together data and writing their chapters for the SOW
 - Blair has a draft base map done
 - Liz is working on digitizing

- Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)
 - i. IWMP update
 - Team meeting beginning of October, will set direction for further work on plan and to receive stakeholder input.
 - Draft IWMP due for stakeholder input in November
 - Public input will come in early Jan 2013
 - Tim to forward notes from Sandi
- Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)

11. Upcoming events

- 2012 WPAC Summit – September 24 to 27th, 2012
- Hike Tour – October 13, 2012
- Cenovus Energy Environmental Education Leadership Clinic – November 5 to 8, 2012

12. Other items

- MLA Barnes sent his regrets
- He would like to meet with the board November or January
- Joan Hughson advised that the Milk River Natural Area and Kennedy Coulee Ecological Reserve - Management Committee are putting together a free supper at Aden September 29 to celebrate their 20th anniversary partnership with Public lands. Looking for a rep from the board to attend. Good for public relations
- John Ross offered to attend on behalf of the MRWCC if his schedule permitted
- Milk River Fire
 - Looking to partner with Kevin France of Public Lands, Uldis Silins of the UofA, as well as potentially researchers from Waterloo regarding watershed recovery from Prairie fire. Further interest from our municipal partners will be expressed on Oct 12th meeting with County of Warner. In the short term, we will be watching the weather to collect potential runoff samples from the burn site to capture information on Arsenic and Mercury releases as well as phosphorus and organic carbon compounds that potentially can have an adverse impact on treatment facilities and aquatic health
 - Brian Hills requests that ESRD be included in discussions regarding water quality and sampling

13. Next Meeting Date

- October 25, 2012 – Alberta Environment office at 1:30pm

14. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:17pm. Darcy Wills seconded. **Carried**

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____